



# News Release



*National Forests in Alabama – Public Affairs*  
2946 Chestnut Street • Montgomery, Alabama 36107-3010 •  
334-832-4470

Website: [www.fs.fed.us/r8/alabama](http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/alabama)

---

**Contact: Dagmar Thurmond – 334-241-8148**  
**Tammy Truett – 334-241-8144**  
**Art Henderson – 256-362-2909**

**UPDATED:**  
**Nov. 12 at 12:30 p.m.**  
**Due to change in flight schedule**

## **Forest Service Special Mission Brings Woodpeckers to New Home**

(Montgomery, AL) November 12 ---- On November 13, five pair of red-cockaded woodpeckers will be translocated from the coast of South Carolina to a new home in central Alabama. The woodpeckers, recognized as an endangered species, will be passengers in a U.S. Forest Service aircraft that will transport them from South Carolina's Francis Marion National Forest to a new home in the Talladega National Forest located in Talladega, AL. The long-distance mission is a coordinated team effort to increase the red cockaded woodpecker populations in the southeastern United States.

"The translocation of red-cockaded woodpeckers completes the first step in restoring an intact and functioning native ecosystem," said Miera C. Nagy, forest supervisor of Alabama's national forests. Under the Forest Health and Restoration Plan, the National Forests in Alabama have spent the last five years restoring and enhancing acres in fire-adapted woodlands through the use of a variety of management tools such as prescribed fire, timber sales, silvicultural treatments and wildlife projects. "It's now time to capture the benefits of this work by bringing this endangered woodpecker back to the forest," said Nagy.

Last year, Art Henderson, a U.S. Forest Service biologist led the effort to move the first five pair of red-cockaded woodpeckers from Ft. Benning, Georgia to the Talladega District. According to Henderson transporting the first five pair of woodpeckers was a resounding success. They settled in to three breeding groups and produced three offspring the first year in their new home.

"Our translocation birds this year are coming to the national forest from a further distance," said Dagmar Thurmond, wildlife program manager for Alabama's National Forest. According to Thurmond, the trip from Edgefield Ranger District in South Carolina raised concerns because the time during transporting has been shown to be a serious factor in survival. "This joint effort between wildlife and fire specialists will give the birds the chance they need for success in their new home," added Thurmond.

-more-

The Forest Service works with several partners through a translocation program to increase red-cockaded woodpecker populations in the southeast. “Translocation is a team effort with federal, state and private organizations,” added Thurmond. The program involves not only sending and receiving breeding pairs of woodpeckers, but extensive restoration of the native forest habitats that support them. The long-term objective is to re-establish the red-cockaded woodpecker species across its natural range.

-FS-

Note to Editor/News Director/Assignment Editor: The U.S. Forest Service aircraft carrying the red-cockaded woodpeckers will land Friday, November 13 at approximately 11 p.m. (tentative schedule if weather conditions are favorable) at the Sylacauga airport. Forest Service wildlife biologists will then release them at sunrise on Saturday in the Talladega National Forest. Please contact Art Henderson, district biologist at 256-493-8161 for specifics.